**Patient Information**

**Dietary Advice for People Taking Warfarin Tablets**

This leaflet is intended for people taking warfarin tablets. If you have any

concerns with your current medication, please speak to your GP, pharmacist, or consultant.

* Do not stop taking warfarin without speaking to your doctor first.
* Never take more than the prescribed dose or give your tablets to others.
* Do not take medicines that contain aspirin unless prescribed by your Doctor.

Please note that when purchasing healthcare products and medications over the

counter, the pharmacist should be informed that you will be taking warfarin alongside

the item. Pharmacists are obliged to discuss your treatment and current medication,

when items are purchased alongside warfarin.

**Warfarin**

Warfarin is used to prevent and treat the formation of harmful blood clots within the

body. Warfarin works by thinning the blood, therefore you should be careful not to

knock, cut or bruise yourself. The blood thins when the effects of vitamin K are

reduced.

**How do I know my warfarin is working?**

Your doctor will complete a blood test to check your International Normalised Ratio or

INR is within the target range. The longer your blood takes to clot, the higher your INR,

which will determine your warfarin dose.

**Dietary advice when taking warfarin**

Vitamin K is essential for blood clotting and is found in the food we eat. This means it is

important to keep your intake of foods containing vitamin K consistent. If you make

significant changes to your diet, such as increasing or decreasing foods containing

vitamin K, it could affect how your warfarin works.

Vitamin K: This vitamin is mainly found in dark green, leafy vegetables and is essential

for normal blood clotting.

Green vegetables are also a source of folate, an antioxidant which protects the body

from damage. Healthy eating guidelines recommend including five portions of fruit and

vegetables each day. Consequently it is not recommended to exclude foods containing

vitamin K all together.

The foods below are particularly high in vitamin K, so keep to no more than one

portion only of these vegetables each day, unless you have discussed an

alternative with your GP.

**Foods to limit – choose one portion per day**

* Kale 3 dessert spoons
* Avocado Half an avocado
* Spinach (boiled) 3 dessert spoons
* Spring greens (boiled) 4 dessert spoons
* Broccoli 6 – 7 small/medium
* florets
* Green cabbage (boiled) 4 dessert spoons
* Sprouts 12 sprouts
* Watercress Quarter bunch
* Asparagus 10 spears
* Coleslaw 2 tablespoons
* Beef liver 4oz (100g)

Alongside a small portion of the foods listed above, it is recommended to add a second

serving of a different vegetable low in vitamin K. If you have more than one portion of

the same food, it will only count as one of your 5-a-day.

Below are some examples of fruit and vegetables low in vitamin K:

**Examples of foods low in vitamin K – have unlimited portions per day**

* Food One portion
* Cauliflower 8 florets
* Courgettes ½ a large courgette
* Mushroom 3 – 4 dessert spoons
* Peas 3 dessert spoons
* Peppers ½ pepper
* Swede ½ cup (80g)
* Tomatoes 1 medium tomato
* Carrots 3 dessert spoons
* Lettuce ½ cup (80g)

One portion = one handful

**Herbal preparations**

Some herbal supplements and teas may interfere with warfarin. People taking warfarin

are advised to not drink more than four mugs of green tea per day. Please ensure that

your GP and dietitian are aware of any supplementation, as it is not recommended to

take more than one supplement at a time. If you are unsure if a supplement is safe to

take with warfarin, please seek advice from your GP or pharmacist.

The following products must not be taken with Warfarin:

* St John’s Wort Glucosamine
* Danshen Cranberry juice
* Cod liver oil Cranberry juice tablets
* Ginkgo Biloba Evening primrose oil
* Grapefruit juice

Multivitamins, these are fine to take, but choose a brand without vitamin K.

**Alcohol**

No more than 14 units of alcohol per week and two alcohol-free days are

recommended. The occasional drink of two units or regular intake of one unit should

not affect your warfarin. Regular heavy and binge-drinking is not recommended. Please

see www.drinkaware.co.uk for more information on units.

**Dental health**

Please inform your dentist that you are on warfarin. Use a soft toothbrush and take

care when using dental floss.